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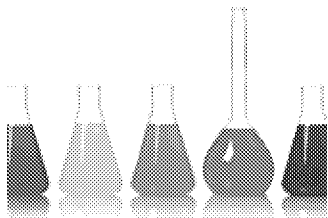
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Subject: News Update: Academies Hosts Workshop on Low Doses of Chemicals (BNA Report)

Risk Assessment
Academies Hosts Workshop on Low Doses of Chemicals

By Pat Rizzuto

Jan. 15 — A National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine committee will hear presentations at a Feb. 3 workshop on the biological effects low doses of three chemicals may have.

The academies Low Dose Committee will hold a workshop called "Potential Case Studies for Unraveling Endocrine-Related Low Dose Toxicity." Academic and government scientists will present information about the effects low doses of bisphenol A, dioxin and phthalates may have on the male and female reproductive systems.

The committee will reflect on whether the chemicals would be useful case studies as it examines whether the Environmental Protection Agency's regulatory toxicity tests would predict public health problems that may occur from environmentally relevant chemical exposures.

"This committee has the opportunity to change the way we think about toxicity testing, low dose risks and their relevance to protecting public health," Thomas Burke, EPA's science adviser and deputy assistant administrator for research and development, told the panel at its first meeting in October 2015 (198 DEN A-17, 10/14/15).

Interested parties can make short remarks at the end of the workshop.

The report the EPA has asked the committee to release in 2018 would address a wide range of contemporary issues facing toxicology and risk assessment.

Underlying Issues Panel Discussing

These issues include:
- what types of toxicity tests produce data that should be considered by risk assessors and, consequently, regulators;
- how risk assessors should use the growing amount of detailed information on biological effects chemicals have on cells and genes;
- how risk assessors can systematically review and integrate human, animal and biological data to determine whether one or more chemicals causes harm; and
- how risk assessors can recognize when data from divergent sources provide evidence of a clear causal connection between chemicals and health problems and when the data provide conflicting evidence.

The committee is focusing on chemicals, often called endocrine disruptors, that mimic, block or alter the normal functions of hormones.

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